

Memorandum

To: Honorable Jerome E. Horton, Chairman
Honorable Michelle Steel, Vice Chair
Honorable Betty T. Yee, First District
Senator George Runner, Second District
Honorable John Chiang, State Controller

Date: July 20, 2012

From: David J. Gau, Deputy Director
Property and Special Taxes Department 

Subject: **Supplemental Outreach Information - Fire Prevention Fee Program**
Board Meeting – July 25, 2012
Item P4 – Property and Special Taxes Deputy Director's Report

Attached please find supplemental outreach material described below, regarding the Fire Prevention Fee Program.

1) Advance Notice

This notice and envelope have been prepared by the Board of Equalization (BOE) and will be mailed in advance to all feepayers who will receive a Fire Prevention Fee (FPF) billing. The purpose of the notice is to alert the feepayers that a FPF billing should be received in the near future. The notice also provides information regarding the new FPF and contains contact information.

2) CAL FIRE Brochure

This brochure contains information provided by CAL FIRE and will be inserted and mailed along with the BOE FPF billings. The brochure contains additional information regarding the FPF and contact information for feepayers should they have additional questions or concerns regarding the FPF.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 445-1516 or Lynn Bartolo at 322-9550.

Attachments

cc: Ms. Regina Evans
Mr. Joel Angeles
Mr. Alan LoFaso
Mr. Sean Wallentine
Ms. Marcy Jo Mandel
Ms. Kristine Cazadd, MIC 73
Mr. Randy Ferris, MIC 83
Mr. Todd Gilman, MIC 70
Ms. Lynn Bartolo, MIC 57
Ms. Joann Richmond, MIC 80

Approved: 

Kristine Cazadd, Executive Director

Dear Property Owner,

The Legislature recently passed and the Governor signed legislation to require some property owners to pay a fee for state fire prevention services in their area.

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), you own property in one of the designated areas and must pay the new California Fire Prevention Fee. The Board of Equalization is required by law to collect the fee.

As the owner of property within this area, you will soon receive a bill requiring you to pay up to \$150 per habitable structure. After you receive your bill, you will have 30 days from the date on the bill to send a payment or protest the amount of the bill in writing.

If you have any questions about this fee, call 888-310-6447 or visit www.firepreventionfee.org.

ADVANCE NOTICE

CA Fire Prevention Fee – Bill Coming Soon



Publication 248 (7-12)



E-18-I-1-FPF (7-12) 
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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SACRAMENTO CA 94279-0001

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URGENT NOTICE



How can I confirm that my structure is within the SRA?

Go to the Fire Prevention Fee website to access the "State Responsibility Area Viewer." A link to the website is shown below. Click the "Launch the Viewer" box to enter your property address or to use other search features.

www.FirePreventionFee.org/SRAviewer

Who is responsible for paying the fee?

The person or entity responsible for paying the fee is the owner on record of a habitable structures in the County tax assessor rolls or as recorded in the records of the California Department of Housing and Community development on July 1st of each year for which the fee is due.

What happens if I don't pay the bill?

If the fee is not paid within 30 days of the billing date, the Board of Equalization (BOE) will mail a late notice, which may include interest and penalties. The BOE may take other actions to collect any unpaid fees. If you have questions about where to direct your payment or to make payment arrangements, please contact the BOE at: 1-800-400-7115 M-F, 8:00-5:00, except state holidays.

I have questions about my bill, what should I do?

If you believe you were billed in error or the amounts shown on the billing were not correctly calculated, you should file a petition for a redetermination. A petition for redetermination must be filed within 30 days of the date of the billing. The petition must be on a form as prescribed, state the specific grounds upon which the petition is founded and include copies of supporting documentation.

To obtain a Petition for Redetermination form, please call our Service Center at **1-888-310-6447** M-F, 8:00-5:00, except state holidays, or visit the website at www.FirePreventionFee.org.

Examples of specific issues that may be considered in a petition include, but are not limited to, whether the structure is located in the SRA; the number of habitable structures located in an area that receives local fire protection services. Please note that filing a petition may not prevent your account from accruing interest or other penalties if it is not paid within 30 days of the date of the bill. Mail your petition to:

**Fire Prevention Fee Service Center
PO Box 2544
Suisun City, CA 94585**



What is the Fire Prevention Fee?

What is a "habitable structure?"



WHAT IS THE
STATE
RESPONSIBILITY
AREA?

**FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS**

Where can I get more information?

What is the Fire Prevention Fee?

Assembly Bill x1 29 was signed into law on July 7, 2011 establishing an annual fee to pay for fire prevention services within the State Responsibility Area (SRA). The Fire Prevention Fee applies to owners of habitable structures on property located within the SRA.

What is the amount of the fee?

The fee amount is \$150 per habitable structure. However, owners of habitable structures within the boundaries of a local fire protection agency will receive a reduction of \$35 per habitable structure. The specific fee amount for your property can be found on the enclosed notice.

What is a "habitable structure?"

A "habitable structure" is a building that can be occupied for residential use.

These include: single family homes, multi-dwelling structures, mobile and manufactured homes, condos and apartment buildings.

What is the State Responsibility Area?

The State Responsibility Area (SRA) is the area of the state where the State of California is financially responsible for the prevention and suppression of wildfires. SRA does not include lands within city boundaries or in federal ownership.

What does the fee pay for?

This fee will fund a variety of important fire prevention services within the SRA including brush clearance and activities to improve forest health so the forest can better withstand wildfire. Other activities funded by the fee include fire break construction, defensible space inspections, fire prevention engineering, emergency evacuation planning, fire prevention education, fire hazard severity mapping, fire related law enforcement and implementation of the State Fire Plan.



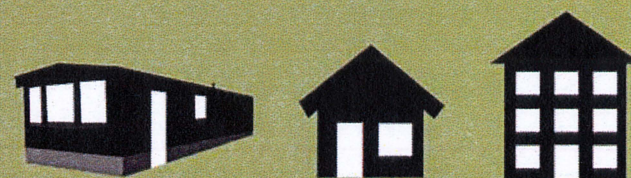
Where can I get more information?

For more information about the Fire Prevention Fee please call:

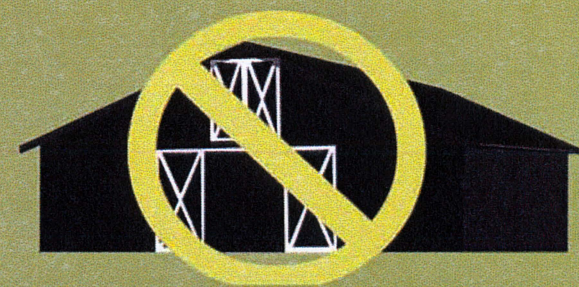
1-888-310-6447

or visit our website, shown below, to review a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

www.FirePreventionFee.org



Habitable structures do NOT include buildings such as garages, barns, outdoor sanitation facilities and sheds.



*Information provided by the
California Department of Forestry
and Fire Protection*

Memorandum

To: Honorable Jerome E. Horton, Chairman
Honorable Michelle Steel, Vice Chair
Honorable Betty T. Yee, First District
Senator George Runner, Second District
Honorable John Chiang, State Controller

Date: July 13, 2012

From: David J. Gau, Deputy Director 
Property and Special Taxes Department

Subject: **Update on the Fire Prevention Fee Program Implementation
Board Meeting – July 25, 2012
Item P4 – Property and Special Taxes Deputy Director's Report**

In my memo to you dated June 11, 2012, I provided you with our implementation efforts on the Fire Prevention Fee (FPF). As you are aware, Assembly Bill (AB)x1 29, authorized a new State Responsibility FPF to be assessed on habitable structures located within the State Responsibility Area (SRA). The Board of Equalization (BOE) is required to annually assess and collect the FPF on behalf of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) in accordance with the Fee Collection Procedures Law. The FPF for the 2011/2012 fiscal year is \$150.00 for each habitable structure located within the SRA. There is also a \$35.00 fee exemption, prescribed by regulation, which may be applicable for each habitable structure, if the structure is also located within the boundaries of a local agency that provides fire protection services.

IMPLEMENTATION:

CAL FIRE's most recent list contains 826,690 names and addresses of feepayers that are identified as owing the FPF as well as the amount of the fee(s) to be assessed. As you are aware, the BOE is responsible for registering and maintaining feepayer accounts based on the list provided by CAL FIRE, as well as issuing Notice(s) of Determination (billings), refunds, adjusting liabilities and performing fee collection duties. CAL FIRE is responsible for evaluating all petitions and claims for refunds submitted in regard to the FPF assessed.

To date, we have uploaded the names and addresses of the identified feepayers into our system and are on track to issue the first billing notices by early August 2012 for the Fiscal Year 2011-12. Our plans are still to mail the billings in alphabetical order, by county. Billings will be mailed each business day and we expect to complete the mailing of all billings for FY 2011-12 by early December 2012. The billings and redetermination notices will display CAL FIRE's name and contact information to assist feepayers with any questions they may have. The notices will also display BOE's standard contact information and "standard" bill notes that address the payment of the fees, application of interest and penalties, and provide instructions for filing a petition. Additional information on each billing will include the number of structures being assessed, the fee and the dollar amount of the fee exemptions, if any.

In January 2013, we are set to receive the listing of the names and addresses of feepayers owing the FPF for FY 2012-13. We will begin to mail the billings for this period no later than March 2013. This will be the only time feepayers will receive two separate billings for two separate fiscal years within the same fiscal year. Thereafter, billings will be mailed annually, during the first quarter of each calendar year.

OUTREACH:

We continue to work on our education and outreach efforts and have also been communicating with CAL FIRE regarding communication plans. Additional information obtained will be provided to you prior to the presentation of this item at the July meeting.

In addition, a mailing schedule by county will be posted on the BOE website and updated frequently as billings are scheduled to be mailed.

In summary, the FPF program implementation is progressing on schedule.

If you would like additional information or have questions relating to this memo, please contact me at 445-1516 or Lynn Bartolo at 322-9550.

cc: Ms. Regina Evans
Mr. Joel Angeles
Mr. Alan LoFaso
Mr. Sean Wallentine
Ms. Marcy Jo Mandel
Ms. Kristine Cazadd, MIC 73
Mr. Randy Ferris, MIC 83
Ms. Lynn Bartolo, MIC 57
Ms. Joann Richmond, MIC 80

Approved: Kristine Cazadd/RMF
Kristine Cazadd, Executive Director